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BY MEE NARS, DATE 5-5-77

Doubt About Soviet Leadership. Although Peiping in its Cuban crisis comments was subdued in suggesting courses of action to the Soviets, it will, in international communist councils, probably attack Soviet behavior and accuse Moscow of insufficient resolution. Moscow will protest that it avoided war and saved Cuba but will be on the defensive.

Doubt About Soviet Commitment. Soviet actions in Cuba will tend to increase Chinese doubts about Moscow's willingness to support its allies, even granting the lack of a formal alliance with Cuba and the vital differences in the long-run between the Soviet stake in Cuba and China.

Fears About Future Soviet Moves. The restrained tone of Khrushchev's messages is bound to rankle Peiping which probably also now fears that the USSR will be looking for agreements on test bans, non-diffusion of nuclear weapons, and even a general detente — all of which Peiping still opposes.

Increased Rivalry Over Cuba. Peiping will probably seek to take advantage of Cuban doubts about the Soviet commitment and to spur Moscow to back Castro's most extreme demands. (In the Bloc, only Peiping reported Castro's five demands.)

Decreased Peiping Bargaining Power. While many other factors are operative, a Cuban settlement would remove one element in any increased Soviet willingness to support Peiping on India and help open the way for renewed bickering on this issue.

cc: U.M.G, SR, S/A, S/P, ARA, BUR, [REDACTED] JCS, S, O, DIA, CIA
FE, HIO, HSC, IO, DOD, BOB, Attorney General,